

Message Text

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14

ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 FSI-01 /033 W

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R 221410Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3775

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AFSI, SA

SUBJECT: FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE ARABIC SCHOOL

REF (A) ALGIERS 376, (B) 75 JIDDA 7361 (NOTAL)

1. JIDDA'S REFTEL SAID "IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE AND A GRAVE SETBACK TO ARABIC LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE IF THE FSI FIELD SCHOOL WERE TO BE ABOLISHED". WE FULLY SUPPORT ALGIERS' REFTEL AND THOSE OF OTHER POSTS ON SAME SUBJECT WHICH URGE RETENTION OF THE FSI FIELD SCHOOL AND ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN TUNIS.

2. ARABISTS IN JIDDA DO NOT BELIEVE THE AUC PROGRAM, EVEN PRECEDED BY A YEAR IN WASHINGTON, WOULD PRODUCE

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ARABIC SKILLS NEARLY AS USEFUL AS THOSE IMPARTED BY

FSI OVERSEAS: FIRST, THE WASHINGTON PORTION OF ARABIC LANGUAGE TRAINING HAS NEVER BEEN VERY EFFECTIVE AS COMPARED TO TRAINING IN THE FIELD; AND SECOND, UNIVERSITY LEVEL LANGUAGE PROGRAMS ARE TOO DIFFUSE, UNFOCUSSED, TO TEACH THE WORKING SKILLS THAT FOREIGN SERVICE PEOPLE NEED.

3. MUCH NEEDS TO BE SAID FOR THE DISCIPLINE AND COHESION OF THE FSI ATMOSPHERE: STUDENTS CAN BE MADE TO WORK UNDER GREATER PRESSURE AND BE GIVEN MORE SPECIFIC DIRECTION (VIA SOME FINE INSTRUCTORS AND REALLY EXCELLENT MATERIALS) IN A TRADE SCHOOL RUN BY AND FOR THE FOREIGN SERVICE. IN THE FSI FIELD SCHOOL THE FOREIGN SERVICE HAS CREATED A USEFUL INSTITUTION, WHOSE COST BENEFIT RATION EXCEEDS THAT OF ANY ALTERNATIVE WE CAN PERCEIVE. THE INSTITUTION SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE DOING ITS JOB.

4. WE ALSO HOPE THAT AT LEAST THE BEST INSTRUCTORS OF FSI BEIRUT COULD BE RETAINED AND EMPLOYED IN ANY NEW VENUE. WITH FSI TEACHING A MODIFIED, SPOKEN MWA, A GOOD MAN IN BEIRUT COULD PRESUMABLY DO A GOOD JOB IN TUNIS OR ELSEWHERE AS WELL.
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